



Rhode Island Emergency Management Advisory Council

May 14, 2013

10:00 AM

MEETING MINUTES

Attendance

Lieutenant Governor Elizabeth H. Roberts
Brigadier General Charles Petrarca
Jamia McDonald, Acting Executive Director, RIEMA
Captain John Kondratowicz, United States Coast Guard
Alysia Mihalakos, Rhode Island Department of Health
Dawn Lewis, Hospital Association of Rhode Island
James Ball, Department of Environmental Management
Susan Earley, Behavioral Healthcare Developmental Disabilities and Hospitals
Vincent Marzullo, Corporation for National & Community Service
Sergeant Michael Reynolds, Rhode Island State Police
Erin Lambie, United States Coast Guard
Steven Florio, Rhode Island Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
Chief Andrew Zarlenga, Urban Search and Rescue
Chief Robert Seltzer Rhode Island Association of Fire Chiefs
Joseph Arsenault, Rhode Island Association of Emergency Managers
Paul Stasiuk, National Grid
Joe McCooey, Rhode Island Courts
Larry Grimaldi, Department of Elderly Affairs
Christopher DeGrave, Governor's Commission on Disabilities
Erin McDonough, Rhode Island Disaster Medical Assistance Team / RI Medical Reserve Corps
Joseph Shilling, Public Utilities Commission
Ken McCarthy, Public Utilities Commission
John Cagno, Urban Search and Rescue
Scott Halsband, Urban Search and Rescue
Jeff Kelly, Mutualink
Jeff Hatcher, Rhode Island Architects and Engineers Emergency Response Task Force 7
Theresa Woodmansee, Protecting the Past Rhode Island
Vlad Ibarra, Office of the Lieutenant Governor

I. Call to Order / Lieutenant Governor Roberts

Chair Roberts started the meeting going over several changes in leadership including the Change of Command for the United States Coast Guard. In April Captain Verne Gifford was relieved by Captain John Kondratowicz at a ceremony at the Newport Naval War College. Captain Gifford relocated to Boston to be the Chief of Staff for Coast Guard District 1, covering all of New England and New York City. Chair Roberts thanked him for his leadership and looks forward to continuing our collaboration with Captain Kondratowicz. Chair Roberts announced the change in leadership for the Urban Search and Rescue subcommittee group and that outgoing chair Chief Robert Seltzer would provide a brief introduction of chair Andrew Zarlenga. Chair Roberts took a moment to thank Chief Seltzer for his arduous work during his tenure. Lastly, the chair welcomed Deputy Chief of Staff for Governor Lincoln Chafee and acting RIEMA Director Jamia McDonald.

The chair went on to discuss some of the events happening this week and previous relevant events since we last met. These include the tabletop exercise organized by the Providence Emergency Management Agency from May 13 to the 16th. The four-day tabletop is a simulation of a major Hurricane and flooding event in Providence. The exercise includes representatives from the city, Dept. of Transportation, Dept. of Health, public safety sector and FEMA. She also reminded members to register for RIEMA's 2013 Hurricane Conference to be held on Thursday, May 30, 2013 at the Crowne Plaza Hotel.

The chair attended the Disaster Housing Preparedness Workshop at Rhode Island College on April 23rd. Since Hurricane Sandy, the Office of Housing and Community and Development and the RI Emergency Management Agency with guidance from FEMA have established a Disaster Housing Task Force. The goal of the workshop was to bring together stakeholders involved in disaster housing recovery. The chair highlighted that the group will provide a presentation of their long term recovery efforts at the June 11th meeting.

Lastly, chair Roberts went on to discuss relevant legislation to our Council. Particularly, she drew attention to Senate Bill 650 and House Bill 5651 Emergency Generator Bills. They aim of the legislation would be to lower from one hundred fifty to one hundred the number of units required for an elderly housing complex to be required to maintain an emergency generator. Both bills had hearings in April and were held for further study. Also, Senate Bill 501 and House Bill 5612 introduced on behalf of the Rhode Island National Guard would enact the International Emergency Management Assistance Compact into Rhode Island law. The Senate version passed and was referred to House Veterans Affairs. However, the House bill was held for further study.

II. Approval of Minutes from March 12, 2013

The Minutes were unanimously approved.

III. RIEMA Update

Brigadier General Petrarca represented the Rhode Island National Guard on behalf of Major General Kevin McBride.

Chair Roberts introduced RIEMA Acting Executive Director Jamia McDonald as someone with significant experience on the policy side, as they have worked numerous times in the Governor's Policy Group.

Acting Executive Director McDonald mentioned that the Boston Bombings took place on her first day on the job. She apprised the membership that Governor Lincoln Chafee had asked her to assess the agency in light of the increased weather events in the past three years. She highlighted the dedicated staff at the agency and saw her charge as strengthening policies and address gaps.

Acting Executive Director McDonald is setting up meetings and introducing herself to stakeholders.

IV. Domestic Preparedness Subcommittee Reports

A. Interoperability Communications Committee—RIEMA Executive Director Jamia McDonald.

Acting Executive Director McDonald discussed the meeting of the ICC and apprised members that the Department of Homeland Security continues its assessment of the 800MHz system.

The ICC is looking at maintenance with continued use and prioritizing improvements. The committee is reviewing the terms and conditions for the Motorola contract, its network coverage, and making recommendations for the next 5 year cycle.

Acting Executive Director McDonald mentioned the agency will work with the Department of Administration – Division of Purchasing to look beyond general maintenance, realign microwaves modeling to create a common operating picture.

B. Healthcare Coalition of Rhode Island—Alysia Mihalakos, Dept. of Health /Dawn Lewis, Hospital Association of Rhode Island.

Ms. Mihalakos submitted the hospital grants. However, the Sequestration cuts to the program of about 125 million would undermine efforts. Ms. Mihalakos discussed the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) monitoring the new strain of H7N9 (bird flu) in China and looking at the Rhode Island H1N1 response as a best practice model.

Furthermore, Ms. Mihalakos discussed the Boston Marathon Bombings and the request of immediate hospital bed availability within 10 minutes of the incident. The request was made as part of the contingency to prepare to move patients from Southern MA to Rhode Island because of the level of acuity but the shift was never needed. The tragedy proved an enhanced situational awareness and that the systems are working.

C. Haz Mat/Decon Technical Working Group—James Ball, Dept. of Environmental Management.

Mr. Ball informed the membership that the Hazmat Team had signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Annita Flax from the Governor's Office. There has been a change in policy in regards to purchasing and dealings with the Department of Administration.

Mr. Ball stated that the 2012 grant for hazmat has been spent in tabletops, training (NIMS, ICS) and emergency response. All of these efforts are pivotal to creating a common operating picture.

Mr. Ball discussed the planned Tabletop exercise in Woonsocket on October 25 for all teams to participate. He plans to have a table for the Hurricane Conference and the Hazmat and Decon teams will have a chance to showcase capabilities.

D. Behavioral Health Disaster Response Network Working Group — Susan Earley, Behavioral Healthcare Developmental Disabilities and Hospitals.

Ms. Earley highlighted the good communication with the Health Department during the Boston Bombings exceeded expectations. She commented that New England states were ready to provide support to Massachusetts for behavioral crisis counselors, but no request were made.

Ms. Earley stated that it has been a busy time for training. There will be a Disaster Behavioral workshop on June 7th with an online component before the live training. Interested parties need to take the ICS & NIMS 700 prior to it. Also, a refresher training on spiritual and emotional care is being offered on June 11. Lastly, the Youth Mental Health First Aid certified a new group of trainees. Chair Roberts asked if there was an ability to call on the mental health first aid. Ms. Earley responded that there will be an ability to call and transfer data, partly with the vendors from Rhode Island Responds. Thus, far there are about 600 individuals on the training roster. The training links will be available through the Rhode Island Responds website.

E. Volunteer/Citizens' Corps Council—Vincent Marzullo, Corporation for National & Community Service.

Mr. Marzullo, stated that seven members of the NCCC team recently arrived. Thus far, there are over 100 teams that have been deployed, and on May 29th they will continue cleanup efforts in Westerly.

Mr. Marzullo stated that Jay Burdick, (VOAD) and Andrea Tatro (RIEMA) were attending the National VOAD meeting.

F. Law Enforcement Working Group—Sergeant Reynolds, Rhode Island State Police.

Sgt. Reynolds provided the updated on behalf of Lt. Wall. Sgt Reynolds discussed the Rhode Island Airport Corporation's Active Shooter/ Improvised Explosive Device (IED) Response Drill.

He highlighted the cross agency collaboration between the Rhode Island State Police, the Warwick Police Department and Fire as they were all in one channel without reprogramming issues. One of the lessons learned from the drill was that communications were excellent. However, the Sgt. mentioned there were some isolated corridors with dead coverage zones and would check with Motorola for coverage improvement. The ICC will help with this effort by looking at the After Action Report.

G. Port Security—Erin Lambie, United States Coast Guard.

Ms. Lambie discussed the June 12 Tabletop exercise the USCG has been working on since December. It will simulate a mass casualty attack on a ferry vessel. She discussed the Tabletop exercise in September and appropriations for Port Security Grants seem to be level funded for about 97 million dollars.

Captain Kondratowicz discussed his emphasis in two areas:

- a. Area Training Security Tabletop Exercise Program. Including increasing capacity with ICS and NIMS training as a great opportunity to discuss strategy, mock exercise, and lay out plans ahead of time.
- b. Drill programs on a monthly basis, with collaboration with the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management on mass rescue incidents. These will create opportunities to get partners involved, align best practices and strengthen partnerships.

H. *Special Populations Working Group*—Steven Florio RI Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing /Susan Earley, BHDDH.

Mr. Florio stated that the regular meetings will convene once again in two weeks, that meeting will try to address some membership gaps and structural issues.

Mr. Florio brought up some concerns which might be due to an updating issue with some residencies not easily accessed on the 911 mapping. He then went on to discuss the memorandum of understanding with the Federal Emergency Management Agency in regards to the use of interpreters for the southern Rhode Island area.

I. *Urban Search and Rescue*—Chief Andrew Zarlenga, North Providence Fire Department (retired).

Outgoing chair Robert Seltzer introduced the new USAR chair retired Chief Andrew Zarlenga from the North Providence Fire Department. Chief Seltzer stated that chair Zarlenga has been involved with USAR since its inception in 2002 as a task force leader.

Chief Seltzer will continue attending EMAC as the representative of the Rhode Island Association of Fire Chiefs.

Chief Zarlenga provided a brief update of their grants and stated that they will update policies and procedures. The workgroup has been engaged with the different trainings and exercise including “Train the Trainer” the active shooter and interagency training as force multipliers.

USAR has a recruitment drive to increase capacity, currently they have operational equipment equal to the federal teams and has enhanced partnerships with the Architects and Engineers Task Force 7.

J. *Transportation Security Working Group*—Brian Pires, Anti-Terrorism Advisory Council/Transportation Security Working Group.

Not present / No report.

K. *Mass Casualty*—Lt. Patrick McMahon, Charlestown Police Department.

Lt. McMahon was representing the State in Washington DC at the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial for Police Week. This year Rhode Island is placing Sgt. Maxwell Dorley of the Providence Police Department on the Memorial Wall.

He provided written report that the Charlestown Ambulance-Rescue Service has received a sub-grant award from RIEMA in order to re-stock and supply the state trailers. Equipment has been ordered, received and prepared for distribution to host communities. The subcommittee anticipates distributing the stock to each hosting agency within the next two weeks. This will bring each trailer's stock up to date with all expired or expiring medical equipment and/or services.

V. New Business, Member Comments, Suggestions

Chair Roberts reminded members that the next EMAC meeting would take place **June 11** focusing on recovery.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:40 a.m.